



Challenge to Change

2012-2013

A DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION PROJECT IN PRESENTATION SCHOOLS

Celebrating 10 Years of Development Education



Nao Nao 1718 - 1784



Irish Aid

Department of Foreign Affairs
An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha



ADDRESS BY SR. IMELDA CAREW, PROVINCIAL S.E. PROVINCE

CHALLENGE TO CHANGE SEMINAR 24 APRIL 2013

Challenge to Change - thinking about this title, only brave people have the courage to challenge - to challenge systems, to challenge others to change their way of doing things, especially if those others are working in high places, like governments or are the very wealthy and powerful. But in challenging others we also have to challenge ourselves and this is often the greatest challenge - to challenge ourselves to change our own way of being and our own way of doing things.



It was a brave undertaking, 10 years ago for Margaret Mary Healy and Liam Kilbride to initiate a project with this title - Challenge to Change. While the title was important, the spirit of the project was more important. The spirit stemmed from being conscious of social issues like justice, ecology, caring for the environment, promoting right relationships and seeing the need of including them in the school programme. All of these are at the heart of Presentation charism and ethos.

Like a fire, Challenge to Change has taken off, and is ignited in the hearts of teachers and students across the country. Six schools participated in the first year 2003. This year there are 34 schools and I know if you were to include all the schools that have partaken in it over the years the number would be far greater than 34.

Like all fires it is fuelled - fuelled by a passion for Justice, for Fairness and for Equality to create a more compassionate, more just and a more sustainable society.

Everyone in this room has this passion to see people being treated fairly at a local, national and global level.

It is this passion that has inspired you to examine sources of unfairness and injustice - to look at reasons why so many people are hungry or living in misery, why so many young people of your own age have to live in extreme poverty with no clean water to drink, no good food to eat. It has inspired you to explore the importance of biodiversity, to celebrate diversity, healthcare for women and children in developing countries - I could go on and on but you see all the topics as you walk around this room.

It is this passion that urged you to dig deeper into the way governments, developers and greedy people who have a lot of power act but may not always think about the consequences of their actions on others - why child soldiers, child labour, human trafficking?

But because you ARE conscious of consequences, You ARE raising awareness around issues like these - you really can and do make a difference.

The fact that you care, already makes a difference.

The fact that you are alerting yourselves and others of the need to care is already changing the world.

The impact of so many young people getting involved in Challenge to Change is like an enormous wave sweeping across our schools and our community, across our whole society and is gradually making a difference.

I said already that it is not easy to change unjust and unfair systems; it is not easy to change the hearts of greedy people who want more and more for themselves, but you are brave young people, ready to take a lead from an army of brave teachers who are willing to sacrifice their time and energy for the benefit of others.

Challenge to Change seeks to harness the energy, enthusiasm and goodwill of you, our young people, as you endeavour, through local action, to make a difference at global level.

Today is a day for celebrating, celebrating what you are showcasing, celebrating your commitment to work for change and celebrating the 10 years of this project Challenge to Change.

We thank all of you, our students, teachers, co-ordinators, Principals, parents and all associated with the various projects for their involvement and participation.

We thank especially the team who are presently co-ordinating Challenge to Change, Margaret Mary Healy, Evelyn Byrne, Liam Kilbride. Without their commitment, enthusiasm and dedication this project would not have grown from 'tiny acorns' to the oak tree it is today.

Organised by
the Presentation
Education Office with
assistance from
Irish Aid, Department of
Foreign Affairs and
Presentation Trustees



Celebrating Ten Years of Development Education

CHALLENGE TO CHANGE

is a development education project for young people attending Presentation schools.

It aims to

- Raise awareness and bring about a greater understanding of global issues
- Create and foster a critical mindset in relation to inequality, social justice and human rights
- Experience at first hand in a real and concrete way how local action can impact positively on global inequality
- Forge closer links between the Irish students and those in developing countries
- Develop an open, sharing and collaborative dialogue between our school communities and those of our Presentation network abroad
- Disseminate information and good practice

The **VISION** of the project is driven by the Presentation charism and ethos which embraces the challenge of working with those who are marginalised and excluded, for whatever reason. Justice, human rights, sustainability and promoting right relationships are central to the Presentation mission.

By informing the students and the wider community the project will bring about a heightened awareness, a social consciousness, a broader vision and an appreciation of developmental issues.



LIVE AND LET LIVE ***Exploring and Preserving Biodiversity***

Presentation Convent National School Castlecomer



We read the Creation story from the Bible and decided that we wanted to help keep this world that God had given us beautiful. Our project also has very strong links with our school's quest to achieve our fifth Green Flag by improving our knowledge and awareness of **Biodiversity** and taking action to reduce the effect of some of the threats to biodiversity both locally and globally.

AIMS

- To inform each class about Biodiversity in the world
- To study our local school and community habitats and more exotic habitats globally
- To further develop our own school habitat, making it as diverse as possible
- To learn about the threats to biodiversity, examine the effects they have on particular habitats and take action to combat them, locally and globally
- To combine Challenge to Change with achievement of our fifth Green Flag for Biodiversity

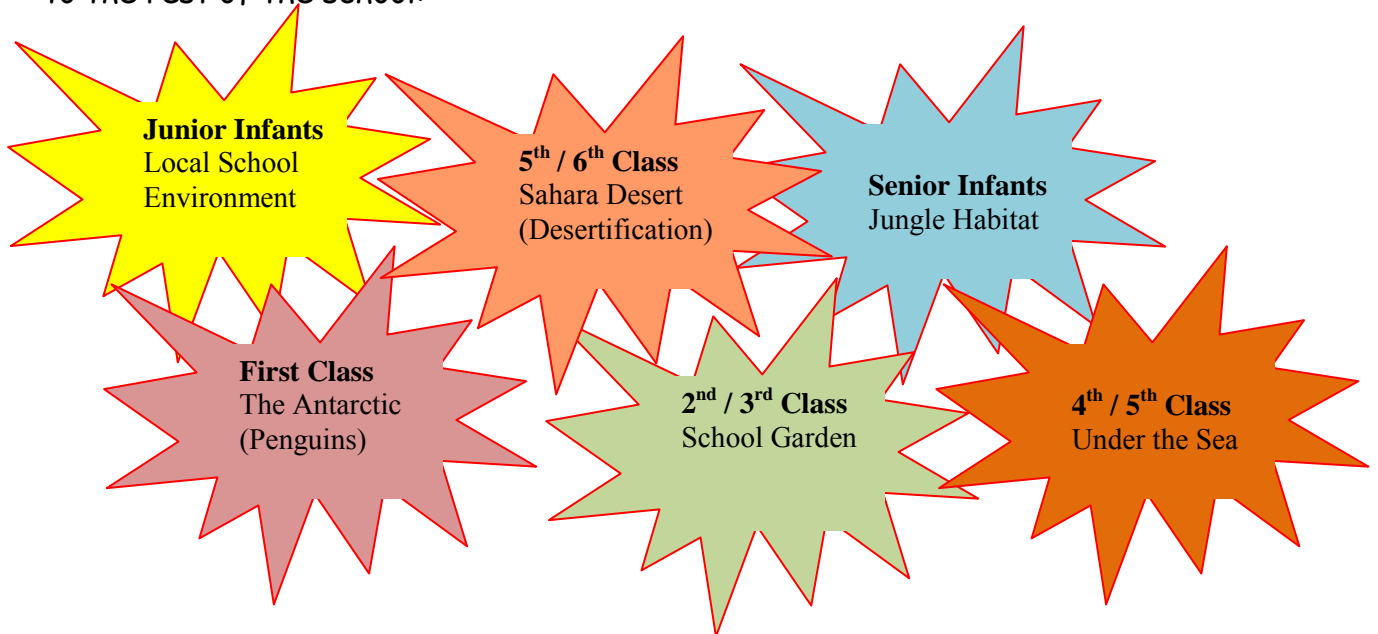
TARGET GROUP

Our project started in senior classes mainly but spread to all classes as our project progressed. Our target was to involve all class levels in age-appropriate learning. Infant classes focused on local habitats and senior classes studied more exotic habitats and learned about the threats to biodiversity.

ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

- We elected our Challenge to Change and Green Flag Committees and held meetings throughout the project.

- We surveyed senior and junior classes about their **awareness of what biodiversity is** and the threats to it, therefore informing us of our learning objectives.
- Senior classes drew a **map of our school grounds**, locating and naming the variety of plants and habitats.
- We conducted an **audit of the plants and animals** in our school grounds.
- We visited our local Demesne and explored the **stream and woodland habitat**, again auditing the plants and animals that we found.
- **Each class chose a habitat** to do project work on and then presented their findings to the rest of the school:

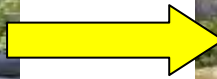


- We invited a local **wildlife ranger** who brought in stuffed animals found in the local environment and told us all about them.



- **We increased our school biodiversity by:**
 - Planting fruit (apple and pear) trees, ash trees and butterfly bushes
 - Caring for the flower patch and planting new plants
 - Creating a wormery

- Designing and making bird feeders from recycled materials and placing them around the school grounds.
- Gathering leaves to create a leaf mould
- Creating a log habitat in an overgrown area in the grass
- Getting local secondary school pupils to build and set up raised beds, with several classes adopting these in which to plant plants, herbs and vegetables



OUTCOMES

- We have increased our knowledge and awareness of what biodiversity means

Questions	BEFORE	AFTER
What does biodiversity mean?	Nature/Environment	Different plant & animal species
Three Threats to biodiversity?	Killing animals, bad smells, chopping down trees	Global Warming, pollution, deforestation
Three Ways we can help biodiversity?	Put more food out for animals, planting, pick up rubbish	Create new animal habitats, Reduce, Reuse and Recycle, Plant new trees and plants

- We have learned about both local and global exotic habitats
- We learned about Global Warming and Climate Change
- We practised our research skills using text books, laptops and ipods
- We promoted the positive actions children can take at home and at school to help reduce effects of global warming
- We have increased the biodiversity in our own school environment by planting and creating new habitats

- We have become more aware of the different plant and animals species living in our school grounds

LINKAGES

Green Schools (Green Flag)
Discover Primary Science

COMMENTS

“I thought the Challenge to Change seminar was a great day. I loved the workshop and enjoyed visiting all the other stalls.”

Megan, 4th Class.

“The day was really fun. I learned about what Irish Aid do and what countries they help.” Amy,
3rd Class

“I really liked seeing what the other schools did and the presentation at the end was really nice, I felt special receiving the certificate. I would love to do it all again!”

Róisín, 5th Class.

Co-ordinators: Michelle O’ Sullivan and Margaret Maxwell

Green School Facilitator: Mary Jacob

A Challenging Thought ...

Muna Abu Jabar, 43, lives with her nine year old son, her elder brother and three other families in Dilaima village, in Sudan. She was nominated by her neighbours as one of fifty women to receive two breeding goats, as part of Concern’s intervention, funded by Irish Aid, which provides small animals to extremely poor female headed households. Since receiving the two goats, they have already produced two offspring, one male and one female.

Source: Irish Aid Progress Report - www.irishaid.gov.ie

... Does this Change your Thinking ...?



W.A.T.E.R.

Coláiste Íosagáin Portarlinton



W.asting water is
A. crime
T.aps left on all the time
E.very drop is worth a lot
R.educe our use and save a lot !

We focused on water as a valuable resource. We learned about global water issues and learned to appreciate our freedom to use water.

AIMS

- To raise awareness of the issues stated above
- To fundraise and donate the money to help provide water wells in a developing country
- To learn about the hidden cost of water in food production
- To research the proposed **Garryhinch Eco Park**
- To create a booklet for the wider school community on water appreciation and conservation

TARGET GROUP

Whole school community and local primary schools.

OUTLINE OF WORK

Transition Year students

- Devised a **questionnaire** on water usage



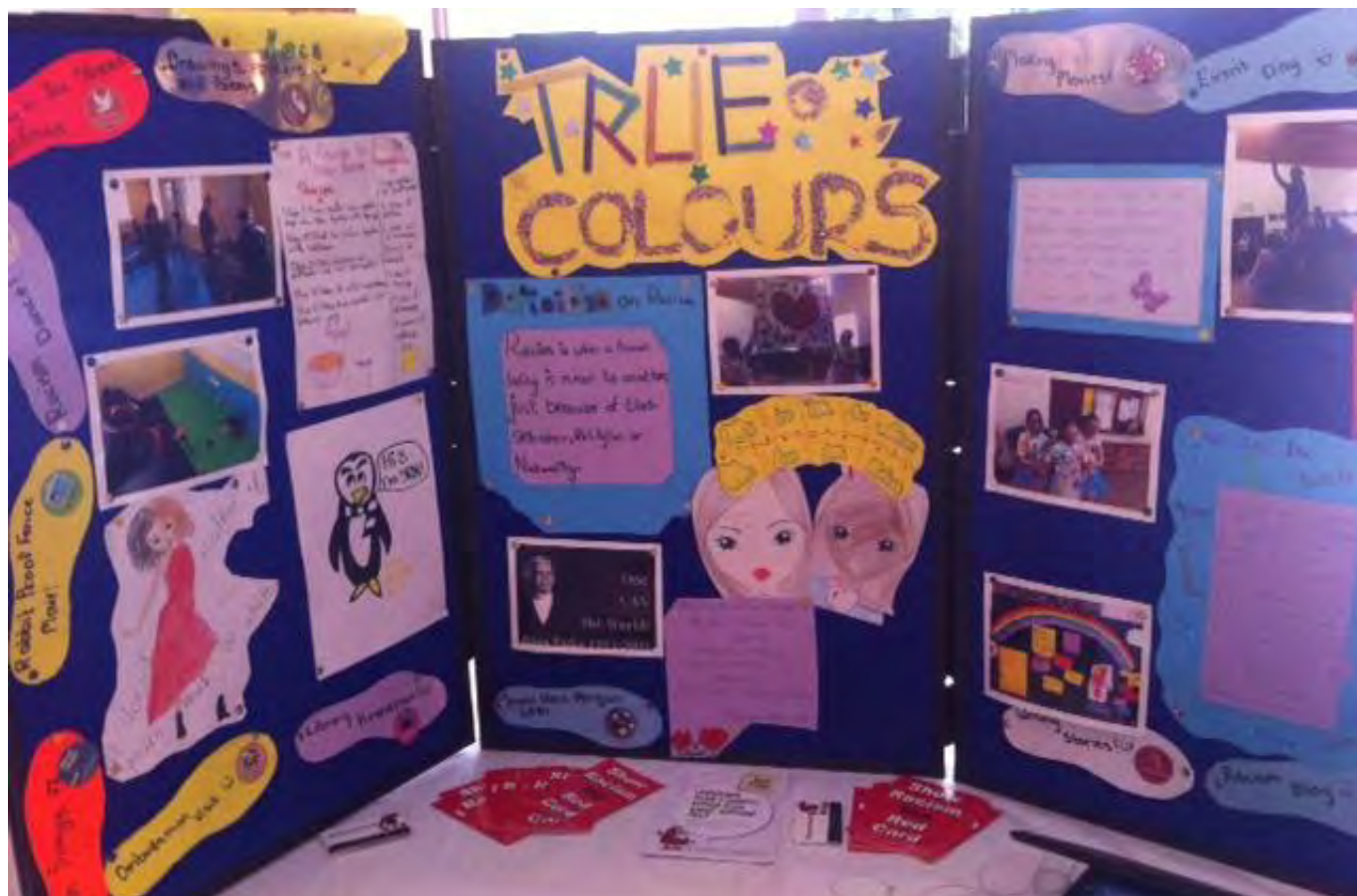
- Carried out an **analysis** of town, school and country water
- Uploaded an article to our school **website**
- Created an **art mural**
- Displayed water conservation fridge magnets
- Explored the **hidden cost** of water project
- Produced **booklets** on water
- Devised water **slogans**
- Carried out research on Garryhinch Eco Park
- Walked 5 km to raise funds for **Trócaire**



Co-ordinator: Marcia Morris

TRUE COLOURS

Scoil Bhríde Naofa Kildare



Our project is about **racism in Ireland and around the world**. Racism is defined as treating another person differently based on their skin colour, ethnicity or religion.

AIMS

- To raise awareness about racism throughout our school and the local community
- To raise awareness nationally and globally through our blog

TARGET GROUP

Our target group for raising awareness was our whole school community- pupils, teachers and parents.



OUTLINE OF WORK UNDERTAKEN

- We did a Christmas dance to the song 'Run Rudolph Run' all about gender inequality with a twist and presented it to all our parents.
- We set up a blog about our project www.kidblog.org/mrsnugents6thclass

- We created a **dance** and **drama** about Racism with Suzanne Hogan from **Synergy and Light** and presented it in the **Aviva Stadium** at the **Show Racism the Red Card** charity event.
- We visited the Ombudsman for Children, **Emily Logan**, and spoke to her about children's rights.
- We created a superhero against racism called **SRN - Stop Racism Now**
- We had Brian McCormaic in from the charity **Harambee** to discuss racism in Kenya and the challenges faced by girls in that country.
- We did a **Stop Animotion** workshop with Michael Fortune through the **Artist for a Day** scheme with **Kildare County Council** and made videos about racism.
- We created a display for our local library for **Anti Racism Week**.
- We created Public Service Announcements for our **blog**.
- We watched a film about racism in Australia called '**Rabbit Proof Fence**'
- We engaged in an **Art workshop** with the dance group Synergy and Light so that we might express our feelings about the project through art and created masks to use in our dance.



WHAT WORKED WELL

- The blog was extremely easy to monitor and set up and cut down on the paper aspect of the project. It also allowed **parents** to see how the project was progressing.
- The dance company Synergy and Light was extremely helpful and showed another aspect to the project by choreographing a piece with the children based on their emotions whilst doing the project.

- The Stop Animation workshop with Michael Fortune taught us all, teacher included, new skills that we could use in other areas also.
- The showcasing of projects on 24th April in Kilkenny worked very well and gave the children something to work towards - an enjoyable day for everyone who attended.
- The charity Harambee Mukuru was extremely helpful and came down to visit the class on numerous occasions to discuss Racism

LINKAGES

- Synergy and Light dance company www.synergyandlight.com Suzanne Hogan
- Harambee Mukuru charity www.harambee-mukuru.com
- Kildare Town Library

POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

The school community was directly affected as the class did presentations to each class. The Kildare Arts Council was involved as we sent them a copy of our videos we made during the workshop they funded. It was like a celebration to mark the end of the project and highlight the work of the children during their Challenge to Change project. Our display in the library allowed us to show the community the extent of our work. We hope to perform our dance for the school at the end of the year to widen our impact.



CONCLUSION

- Excellent topic to do in a multi-cultural school.
- Important to emphasise acceptance and not just tolerance.
- The linkage with the Suzanne Hogan and the personal attention received from her was definitely a highlight as the children knew her own personal experiences of racism in Australia and could relate better to the project as a result.
- As a dance choreographer, Suzanne Hogan of Synergy and Light, went above and beyond the call of duty for rehearsing and performance and brought a new dimension of emotion to the project that would not have been possible otherwise. This activity allowed the girls to show their frustration at the world as well as their compassion through dance.
- The blog was an easy platform to manage and having access to it encouraged the children to come up with ideas to publish on it. It was also easy for me to develop a sense of interaction on it by giving them tasks on it to encourage further learning.



**HARAMBEE
EDUCATION**

Co-ordinator: Gráinne Nugent

CELEBRATING CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Presentation Primary School Kilkenny



AIMS

- To promote the celebration of cultural diversity in our school
- To promote tolerance and respect for all the cultures in our class
- To celebrate and raise awareness of the diversity and similarity of the cultures in our class

ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

- Having ascertained that we had girls from seven distinct cultures (**Ireland, Poland, Lithuania, China, Bangladesh, South Sudan and Italy**) in our class we decided to take the opportunity offered by Challenge to Change to explore and celebrate these cultures.
- We worked in groups to find information on the various **celebrations and festivals** in these cultures. We also learned how to say "Merry Christmas" in all **seven**

languages and made a **presentation** on this theme to our school at our **Christmas Assembly**.

- In small groups we explored the countries represented in our class and we enjoyed compiling **fact files** on each of them.
- In art, under the direction of **Shona Flood, a local potter**, we each made a **wall plaque** with a map of one of our countries on it. We also depicted the foods of the countries in pottery. For many of us this was the highlight of the project.
- We also had a **food tasting** day. Some of our parents provided national dishes and we had great fun tasting them.
- Food is an important part of any culture, so we decided to write **our own international cookbook**, featuring many of the dishes we had tasted.
- Our school is privileged to have girls from many different countries as students. Often, girls begin school here with little English, so we compiled an **International Phrase Book**. We focused on phrases that are useful in school. We hope that it will help both teachers and pupils.
- We decided to make a **Powerpoint presentation** which we used to show our school all the work we had done. We presented this at our **April assembly**.



OUTCOMES

The project was a stimulating, educational and worthwhile experience for all of us. We learned how to work together, how to co-operate and sometimes how to compromise! We saw that each girl could use her own unique talents when working as part of a group to produce a joint project. We also developed I.T. skills. We realised that there are many different cultures in the world. We saw how cultures can differ in some ways and yet be similar in others.

POSITIVE IMPACT

- Spirit of goodwill and co-operation between pupils.
- Awareness and tolerance of other cultures.



STUDENTS' COMMENTS

"I really enjoyed learning about other cultures."

"The food-tasting was great fun. I tried food that I hadn't even seen before and it was lovely!"

"I learned loads of new facts about other countries."

Co-ordinator: *Teresa Denieffe*

A Challenging Thought ...

There are around 80 million small farms on the continent of Africa and up to 75% of all Africans rely on agriculture for their livelihoods.

www.selfhelpafrica.org

... Does this Change your Thinking ...?

CHILDREN HELPING CHILDREN

St. Joseph's G.N.S. Mountmellick



The students were encouraged to come up with ways in which we could help other children less well off than themselves.

AIMS

- To raise awareness of the difficulties that other children face
- To encourage the girls to help these children
- To fundraise for different charities
- To bring some joy to children in need
- To make a link with the work of **Nano Nagle**
- To raise awareness within the community of the work we are doing.



TARGET GROUP

Third Class - Sixth Class with Fifth and Sixth Classes doing most of the work.



MOVE is a charity that sends student doctors from Trinity College to developing countries during the summer months. Donations go towards buying medical supplies for these hospitals. €300 was raised by having an **Ireland Dress Up Day**.

ACTIONS

Class		
Sixth Class		<p>Sixth Class girls knitted teddies to give to children all over the world. A local lady who works in Calcutta spoke to the girls of the work she does and she was presented with a basket of teddies.</p>
	Knit-a-Square	<p>The girls knitted squares and made them into blankets for street children. They also knitted finger puppets and little caps and booties for premature babies.</p>
	Team Hope	<p>Team Hope sent a speaker to speak to the class about the work they do. The girls pledged to donate some of their Confirmation money to the charity.</p>
	Plan Ireland	<p>Mary Hanlon visited the class to speak of the campaign "Because I am a girl".</p>
Fifth Class	Project	<p>These girls did a project on the work of Nano Nagle.</p>
All Classes		<p>All classes participated in a Hallowe'en Dress-Up.</p>
	Team Hope Christmas Shoebox Appeal	<p>All the girls were encouraged to put together a parcel for Christmas. A DVD of the work of this charity was shown to all classes.</p>
	Mission Alive	<p>At Mass on Mission Sunday, the girls explained the work of this local charity which supports an orphanage in Zambia. Examples of the work were brought to the altar. A donation was made to this charity.</p>

OUTCOMES

The girls are now very aware of how many children are less fortunate than themselves.

- We have donated over €800 to our chosen charities.
- 85 Christmas boxes were sent from our school.
- Hundreds of teddies have been sent to children in the developing world.

We are really pleased with the project. We probably did a little too much! I think maybe we were a little ambitious taking on so many charities. The girls really enjoyed the work. The Teddies for Tragedies is a fabulous project for children and many girls involved members of their families in the knitting of teddies. One girl told me that she and her Gran spent all of mid-term knitting teddies! The guest speakers were very informative. We were a little disappointed that the lady who brought teddies to Calcutta didn't bring back photographs of the children receiving the teddies in India. Our quiz with the prize of a teddy at the seminar was a great idea.



Co-ordinator: *Yvonne Murphy*

A Challenging Thought ...

In developing countries, a third of all child deaths are linked to hunger.

www.wfp.org

... Does this Change your Thinking ...?

EVERY GENERATION NEEDS A NANO NAGLE!

Presentation Senior School Mullingar



Our project centred on **Human Rights** and specifically every child's **right to an education**. We reflected on the life of Nano Nagle and her response to her own "Challenge" to change the lives of Catholic children in Ireland during the Penal times. We found out about education now in developing countries around the world and tried to raise awareness of the inequality and lack of resources in many parts of Africa. We fundraised for **Book Aid International** and **Concern** by holding a Book Swap and Bake Sale.

AIMS

- To learn more about Human Rights
- To communicate this information to others
- To create an awareness campaign
- To identify and contact the various charities trying to improve education in other countries
- To successfully educate the girls in our school, in a fun atmosphere, about the problems children face trying to receive an education in the developing world
- To research Nano Nagle and the founding of the Presentation Sisters to provide an education for children in Ireland
- To show Nano as a pioneer in Education Rights
- To raise money for our chosen charity
- To develop new skills in Communication, Organisation and Teamwork



TARGET GROUP

The children, parents and teachers in our school and all the visitors to our stand in Kilkenny

ACTIONS

- We increased our understanding of the meaning of Human Rights.
- We created a **Class Charter**.
- We discussed the **United Nations Declaration on Human Rights** and explored some of the times when people's Human Rights were violated in History.
- We empathised with people in the developing world who are being denied their human rights by reading some stories from **Send My Friend to School**.
- Sr. Nuala, Franciscan Missionaries, visited us and spoke about **education in India**.
- A speaker from **Concern** told us about **education in Kenya**.
- We researched the life of Nano Nagle, the founding of the Presentation Congregation and Nano's work as a **pioneer** in Education Rights.
- We made a movie about the life of Nano Nagle.
- We created a comic strip depicting Nano's life and produced a Powerpoint presentation on Nano Nagle.
- We held a hugely successful **Book Sale** to raise money for Book Aid International and raised €170.
- We held a **Bake Sale** and raised €170 for Concern.

CONCLUSION

It was a very worthwhile and enjoyable project. The children developed a wide range of skills: working in groups, undertaking research, improving their ICT skills and presenting their work.

As a result of our participation in this Challenge to Change project we are now more aware of Human Rights. We have an understanding of the agencies that are working to improve education in developing countries and that we can do something to help them. We are more appreciative of how lucky we are compared with some of our peers around the world.



STUDENTS' COMMENTS

"The best part of doing the Challenge to Change project was that you got to work with your friends and display your project for everybody to see." Chantel

"I liked looking at other people's projects in Kilkenny and learnt so much." Farah

"I really enjoyed learning about schools in countries in Africa and I realised how lucky I was to live in Ireland." Shannon

"My favourite part of the Challenge to Change project was organising the Book Swap and Bake Sale because it felt good to do something to help children in other countries who are not as lucky as us." Nourhan

Co-ordinator: Catherine Denieffe

WATER, WATER, PLEASE BE AWARE!

Scoil Áine Clondalkin



AIMS

- To measure the school's usage of water and to reduce this figure over time
- To create an awareness campaign to show pupils how water can be conserved
- To understand and appreciate the water treatment process
- To appreciate how fortunate we are to have water vis-a-vis those in developing countries

TARGET GROUP

Whole school community

ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

The whole school participated in a wide number of initiatives and activities. We believed that this would enable all pupils to learn how to best conserve water in school and then in turn use the lessons learned in their home lives.

Whole School Activities

- Pupils read the water meter on a weekly basis and made a **log** of it.
- The Green School Committee met regularly to discuss the usage of water and identify ways to create awareness of **conserving water**.
- The Green School Committee members carried out **weekly checks** of all classrooms and the staffroom to check that items were being put in the correct bin and also checked to see that there were no dripping / running taps in rooms.
- Each class appointed a **Water Monitor** who checked to see if taps had been left dripping / running at any point during the school day.
- Toilet cisterns in the main building were fitted with **water-saving devices**.

- A **Poster Competition** was held and all pupils participated in it - great logos and heroes were illustrated. A winner from each class was selected and received a water bottle for their efforts.
- A **Water Activities Day** was organised for the whole school. Each class participated in a range of activities, for example, how to save water when washing your teeth, carrying water over a distance, water relay races, water pollution story and identify the amount of water held in containers.
- Water was and continues to be collected in **water butts** on the school premises and reused in the garden.
- Completed **surveys** asking people to determine how much water they used themselves.



Activities by individual classes

- Third Class prepared a **map** of the school building and identified the different **sources of water** in the school.
- Fifth Class measured the number of times that toilets are flushed in a classroom.
- Fourth Class created **short, snappy signs** that are now displayed over all sinks and taps in the school to remind users to use water carefully.
- Third Class created a **Water Song** which illustrated what they learned about water.
- Fourth and Fifth Classes were visited by Niamh O'Byrne from **Trócaire** who spoke to the classes about the lack of water in developing countries.
- Fifth and Sixth Classes visited the Ballymore Eustace Water Treatment plant to learn about how water is supplied to the Clondalkin area.



OUTCOMES

All pupils throughout the school participated extremely well at all stages of the project.

- Reading the water meter: all pupils know that they will have to be doing this soon in their own homes so were very interested to learn how to read it and compare readings.
- Conserving water: pupils made a real effort to turn off any running taps, reducing the amount of time they spent in the shower, turning off the tap when they were brushing their teeth, using water wisely, e.g. watering plants with the left over water in water bottles.
- Pupils and teachers learned a huge amount in their visit to Ballymore Eustace about how water is treated especially the amount of sludge that is collected. They were very interested to learn how the sludge is extracted and compacted and then made into bales of sludge. There may be a pupil or two in the future who may be able to suggest alternative ways for the sludge to be used!
- Pupils also enjoyed hearing direct experiences from a representative from Trócaire about the problems facing those that do not have water readily available. It made the children appreciate how fortunate

- they are to have their own water supply here in Ireland.
- Pupils really enjoyed the Water Activities Day held in school. The pupils watched and took part in a demonstration on how to save water when brushing their teeth. We feel that this will have the biggest impact as Scoil Áine's pupils will go to each of their homes and encourage their family members to turn off the tap when brushing their teeth.
- The activity most enjoyed on the day was the carrying water in buckets and participating in water relay races where efforts were made to use as little water as possible - some few pupils did get wet!
- On the day when the school team went to Kilkenny to present their project, the pupils conducted surveys with visitors to the stand to work out how much water was used. In general, the pupils found that most people didn't realise that they used as much water as they actually do so this was a very worthwhile exercise.



Water is a huge topic. From our perspective, it was important that the pupils understood how each of them can make an impact on how water is used. Moving on from this, we would like to place more emphasis on the issues surrounding the lack of water in developing countries. Whilst this was addressed to a certain degree, it could have been examined in more detail and the issues could have been developed further. There is scope to do this in the following year as the school hopes to acquire the Water Flag in the coming year.

LINKAGES

- Through the Challenge to Change office, it was nice that we were able to have a visitor from Trócaire visit the school.
- It was also nice to see how South Dublin County Council welcomed the Fifth and Sixth Classes to the Ballymore Eustace Water Treatment Plant. A proposed one hour visit turned in to a visit nearly two and a half hours long! The tour was extremely informative and the pupils absorbed a huge amount of information on the actual process.

POSITIVE IMPACT

The project was very well received by the whole school community. The pupils regularly completed projects, drawings, exercises at home throughout the year. They also took home their experiences from school such as reading the water meter, turning off taps (especially when brushing teeth) and their enthusiasm to encourage others to reduce the usage of water.

CONCLUSION



The project throughout the course of the year was extremely successful as it raised each pupil's awareness about their use of water and what each one of them can do in order to reduce their usage of water and conserve it.

This project was most engaging. The pupils were very interested in all aspects of the project and realised quite quickly that they could do **something very real and tangible** to conserve water in their homes, school and all around them. It made them also appreciate what they have and made them realise what a treasured commodity water actually is.

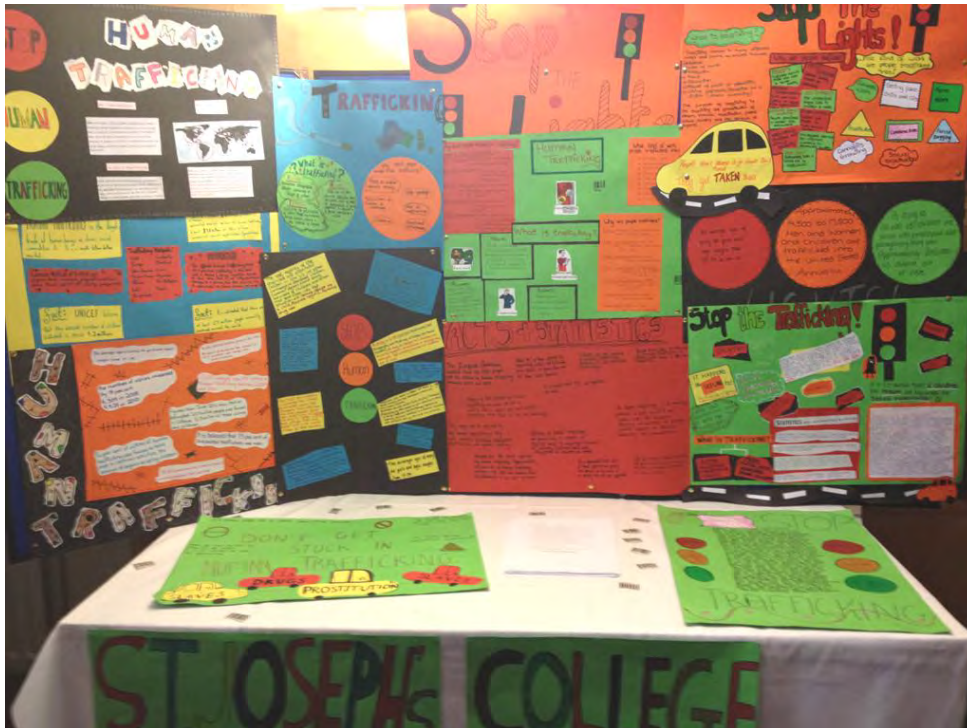
There is a huge amount of work that can still be done in the whole area of water. It is hoped that

the school can earn its Green Flag next year.

Co-ordinator: Mary Hurley

STOP THE LIGHTS

St. Joseph's College Lucan



This year our Transition Year pupils completed their Challenge to Change project on **Human Trafficking**. The target group for the project was our senior students and teachers.

AIMS

- To raise awareness in our school about the issue of trafficking in Ireland and around the world
- To explore the issue of trafficking and the effect it has on people caught in this world
- To learn what our government and governments around the world are doing to deal with this issue
- To explore the reasons why people are trafficked

WORK UNDERTAKEN

We decided to research the topic of trafficking and the different types of slavery in the world today and then raise awareness through a **poster campaign**. We researched the different types of situations trafficked people find themselves in e.g. domestic slavery, sex slavery, street beggars. We researched how these people are targeted and questioned if people trafficked tend to come from similar backgrounds. We explored various **real life scenarios** of people who ended up trafficked and the students imagined themselves in these situations and discussed what they would do.



For our research we used many different websites, in particular Ruhama.ie, Blueblindfold.gov.ie, stopsextrafficking.ie, turnofftheredlight.ie and aptIrealnd.org. All of these websites were really helpful and gave us great ideas and information.



On one day the two Fourth Year classes involved in the project came into school wearing **barcode tattoos** that carried slogans such as "buy me", "product", "slave". These barcodes created a great talking point in the school and sparked a lively debate amongst all students about how human beings are viewed as products by the traffickers and definitely heightened awareness of the issue.



Based on our research, we decided to split into different groups and design **posters** providing information on each of the areas investigated. We then displayed the posters around the school and invited the senior students and teachers to view them. We designed a **quiz** based around the information on the posters to ensure that the students were actively learning from the display.



We gave a talk to the seniors about trafficking and encouraged them to get involved in **campaigns** such as emailing their local T.D.'s through turnofftheredlights.ie and joining

stopsextrafficking.ie's facebook page so as to keep themselves well informed and up to date on any developments.

The Fourth Year Classes also viewed the movie, **Taken**. While a lot of this movie is very much a Hollywood action adventure, it was still quite shocking for the girls to see how easily people can be tricked into a trafficking situation. They also got a clear picture of just how the business works and how lucrative it can be.

Overall a lot was learned about the topic of trafficking. We found a lot of students were completely unaware of the issue in the world, let alone in Ireland. They were shocked and appalled at the statistics. Overall, studying this issue was a real eye opener to all.

STUDENTS' RESPONSES

"I would now be a lot more suspicious when I am looking at job advertisements."

"I was very surprised to find out that human trafficking happens in Ireland, not just in other countries around the world."

"Doing this project has made me much more aware of my surroundings now."

"I understand the topic a lot more now and I am more careful on the internet and in public."



Co-ordinator: Ciara Whelan

A Challenging Thought ...

Across 63 developing countries, girls were more likely to be out of school than boys among both primary and lower secondary age groups. The gender gap in school attendance widens in lower secondary education, even for girls living in better-off households.

Source: The Millennium Development Goals Report 2013 - www.unwomen.org

... Does this Change your Thinking ...?

GLOBAL WARMING ***its effects on animals and plants***

Presentation Primary School Warrenmount



AIMS

- To create an awareness on the impact of **global warming**
- To have an understanding about the damage it is causing to our animals
- To realise the importance of plants on our earth and the effect global warming is having on them
- To educate the school community on such impacts and changes
- To identify ways in which we can offset the rate of global warming

TARGET GROUP

- Fifth Class
- The whole school community

ACTIONS

Our students carried out extensive research on global warming by using books, magazines, the internet and other social media (documentaries). They examined and investigated the effect global warming has on plants and animals by carrying out **scientific experiments**:

- The **melting of ice-caps** resulting in flooding
- **CO₂** - how it is made by burning, using a candle to represent factories, planes, cars.
- The **greenhouse effect** - experiment in two jars, the closed lid of one jar representing the CO₂ that traps the heat.
- **Carbon footprint** - each child recorded their carbon footprint and looked at ways they could reduce it.
- **Climate/carbon neutral** (We looked at companies that neutralise their CO₂ production by planting trees - for example Ben and Jerry's ice-cream!)



They created and carried out surveys and questionnaires throughout the school community.

OUTCOMES



The students helped create an awareness of the effects of *Global Warming* on plants and animals throughout the school community. Everyone became very aware of the **consequences of global warming** and the importance of looking after our environment. A heightened awareness as to what '**we can do**' to help prevent global warming was also created. It made the children realise how important it is to save energy and how they can make all the difference by **making small**

changes in their own lives. Working together developed teamwork, presentation and IT skills.



IMPACT OF GLOBAL WARMING

- Ice is melting worldwide.
- Sea levels are rising.
- Some butterflies, foxes, and alpine plants have moved farther north or to higher, cooler areas.
- Precipitation (rain and snowfall) has increased across the globe.
- Hurricanes and other storms are likely to become stronger.
- Floods and droughts will become more common.
- Less fresh water will be available.
- Ecosystems will change—some species will move farther north or become more successful; others won't be able to move and could become extinct.

WHAT WE CAN DO

- Take shorter showers - heating water uses energy.
- Plant trees.
- Walk or cycle instead of driving by car.
- Dress warmly inside your house when it's cold, instead of turning up the heat.
- Turn off the lights when you leave a room. Use florescent bulbs!
- Turn off your TV or computer when finished using it.
- Unplug chargers when not in use.
- Remember to close the door when the heat is on.
- Watch less TV!!

LINKAGES

www.globalwarming.com/ www.conservation.org/
www.epa.gov/climatestudents/
www.freewebs.com/globalwarmingkids/
www.cooltheworld.com



CONCLUSION

Our students thoroughly enjoyed carrying out this project. Not only did the children become more informed about global warming and its consequences but they also gained new skills, particularly communication skills. The project enabled the students to take on tasks and ensure they were completed. The students worked very well together. As a result of doing the project they became more aware of their own lives and what small steps they can take in ensuring the prevention of global warming.

A message from the Fifth Class girls

The impact of Global Warming affects the temperature of the earth and interferes with the living conditions of plants and animals. It is very important that everyone is aware of the dangers of 'not' looking after their environment and should become involved in taking little steps in their everyday lives to change this!



Co-ordinator: Johanna Kilroy

UNITED CULTURES

Presentation Primary School George's Hill



Our project this year challenged us to explore the different nationalities in our class. We chose this topic because we wanted to grow closer as a class-group and learn more about each other's cultures, traditions and ways of life.

AIMS

- To explore and experience the different foods, music, fashions, education, dance, currency, language and traditions of each other's countries
- To explore and discuss the history and local legends of our selected countries
- To broaden our understanding of the world and celebrate each other's differences
- To discuss and challenge stereotyping and prejudice in our Irish society today
- To strengthen our bonds of friendship by gaining a deeper, more meaningful understanding of each other's cultures

TARGET GROUP

The project was confined to Fourth Class as our primary aim was to "gel" together as a class-group and grow together as friends through trust and understanding.

ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

We listed the seven nationalities represented in our class: **China, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Mauritius, Nigeria and Romania**. We decided we would collect our information through interviews, visits from guest speakers, class trips, cooking classes and weekly online research sessions.

China was our first country. We explored the geographical and natural features of the country, the food, music, dance, festivals and traditions of China. We listened to traditional and modern Chinese music every day. Our favourite Chinese musician was Lang Lang. **Tina**, from China, brought in and presented a photo album of her life in China. It was very interesting to see pictures of Tina's home and family.

On the 6th December we interviewed Dora (Hungarian) and Christina and Alina (Romanian). It is traditional in their countries to receive Christmas presents on this day. They had been visited by St. Nicholas that morning and he had left them presents in their shoes. We shared and recorded our experiences of Christmas in our different cultures and the traditions that are special to us each year. It was really special.

The next country we researched was **Hungary**. We explored its geographical features and researched its food, music, fashions and cities. We were very interested in the hot water baths that are popular in Hungary. We tried our hand at making Goulash, a traditional Hungarian soup. It was great fun making it together and it tasted delicious.

On Monday the 14th January the **Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade**, Mr. Joe Costello, came to visit our school as part of the launch of **Our World Irish Aid Awards**.

In January, **Anna** came into our class to speak to us about school in **Romania**. We compiled a list of questions prior to her

arrival and interviewed her. It was very informative and we enjoyed her company.

We explored **Ireland** in February. We learned several traditional Irish songs on the tin whistle and made a special effort to speak Irish throughout the school day. We also learned a traditional Irish Céili dance. It was great fun and great exercise!

In March we began our study of **Latvia**. We carried out research sessions online and recorded our findings in our SPHE copies. We enjoyed learning about the music and fashions in Latvia and looking at pictures of the capital Riga.

Also in March, we moved on to our next country, **Mauritius**. We spent a long time researching Mauritius online and also listening to Mauritian music, Sega. We tasted some Mauritian food and really enjoyed it.

Nigeria was our focus in April. We used online research sessions to collect our information and began to construct our project booklet for the Challenge to Change exhibition. We made some Nigerian rice, Jollof Rice, using a recipe given to us by **Baisah's Mam**. The rice was delicious and we enjoyed the experience of cooking together. We also listened to Nigerian music and explored Nollywood, the Nigerian film industry.

Our study of **Romania** was really enjoyable. We learned about the myths and legends in particular that of Dracula. It was really scary but we loved it. We had some traditional Romanian food and danced to some Romanian music.

OUTCOMES

We have

- become closer friends
- gained a great insight into the issues of the wider world
- learned a lot about each other's cultures
- become very good online researchers
- enjoyed cooking together.
- enjoyed learning a little of each other's languages and speaking them throughout the day

We are friends with people we didn't really know before.

STUDENTS' COMMENTS

“Challenge to Change is very fun, educational work to do at school. There is History, Geography, Myths and Legends involved. We are very serious about this project.”

“The girls were amazing help telling us things about their families, friends, cultures and food. They were great for help and I loved it.”

“We have had to put a lot of work into everything. I love that we can learn to understand each other. It's important that we can explore all these different countries. It's also very special because love, friendship and understanding bring us together.”

“We are working more as a team since we started this project. We are bonding more through trust and understanding.”



CONCLUSION

We had a great experience of Challenge to Change this year. We've learned so much about each other and grown closer as a class as a result. We feel like we have broken down cultural barriers and also developed our sense of understanding and respect for each other.

Co-ordinator: Eliza Matthews

CHILD LABOUR IN INDIA AND CHINA

Presentation Secondary School Ballingarry



Our project this year aims to examine the problems associated with child labour with an emphasis on the clothing industries.

AIMS

- To learn about child labour in our world today
- To research - the how, the why and the where child labourers are used
- To look at the clothing industry and the use of child labour
- To research possible solutions

TARGET GROUP

- Transition Year

ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

- Students had a choice of what area of child labour they wanted to research
- Collectively they came up with a slogan
- Their research included books and internet
- Their project was displayed in our central area
- Students gave a talk to their parents on our child labour project at our Transition Year Display Night

WHAT WORKED WELL

Having students research different aspects of child labour

- Agriculture
- Armed conflict
- Debt bondage
- Clothing industry
- Slavery

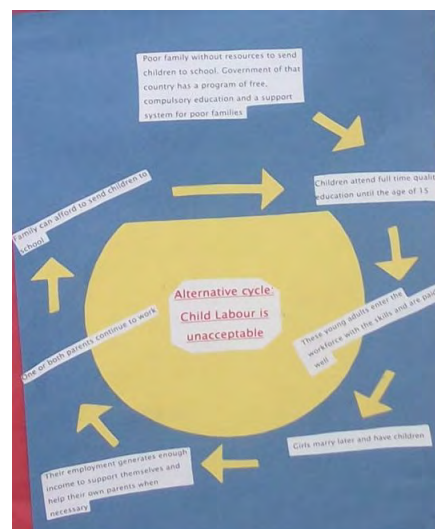
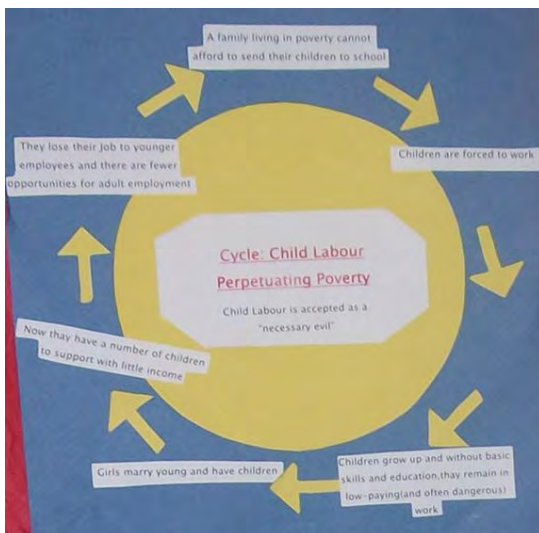


IMPACT OF PROJECT ON COMMUNITY

- Students throughout the school had an opportunity to view the project and ask questions
- Students in Third Year decided to do their CSPE project on Fairtrade

TRANSITION YEAR NIGHT

Parents had an opportunity to view the project and listen to one of our students who explained each component of the project



CONCLUSION

Students acquired a good insight into the issue of child labour throughout the world. It is hoped that the seeds are planted in the fertile minds of these students will bear fruit in the years to come and that in the future child labour will be a thing of the past.

Co-ordinator: *Margaret Murphy*

WATER – A PRICELESS GIFT

Presentation Primary School Clonmel



We decided to take 'water' as our theme this year as it is a topic that can be explored by all classes in primary school. We also wanted to support our Green Schools Committee as we worked towards our third Green Flag. The whole school community was involved in this project.

AIMS

- To understand the precious nature of God's gift of water
- To appreciate the importance of water in our lives
- To spread awareness of water conservation in the school community
- To create an awareness of the need for water conservation in the wider community
- To explore some of the 'water issues' experienced by people in developing countries

WORK UNDERTAKEN

Gaining an appreciation of water in our lives:

- Infant classes planted bulbs and seeds and carried out **experiments** about floating and sinking.
- Many classes learned about the **water cycle** and kept a record of rainfall or carried out experiments on water.
- Rang 4 learned about our local river, the Suir, and wrote **shape poems** on the theme of water.
- Senior classes examined and discussed a variety of photos depicting the uses of water, the opportunities presented by water and the difficulties associated with a shortage or an abundance of water.

Raising awareness of the need for water conservation:

- We raised awareness of the importance of conserving water through discussions at Assembly and by creating displays around the school. On **Water-Action Day** we created a display from water bottles to show how much water we use in school.
- **Robbie Corbett**, a **County Council engineer**, spoke to pupils from Second to Sixth Class about the water treatment plant in Clonmel.
- Members of the **Green School Committee** carried out a demonstration/experiment re brushing your teeth with the tap running and the tap off. This proved to be a popular and effective means of highlighting the message to a large group.
- Pupils made **posters** about conserving water and displayed them around the school.
- The Language Class now use a basin of water to wash their hands after art. The children know to use the soap first before they run the tap.
- Pupils filled in **surveys** at home with their parents about water usage in the home. Pupils in Rang 6 kept records of the amount of water they used over a number of days.
- Rang 6 pupils designed models using recycled water bottles. The winning design, **Wendy Waters**, was made by four girls and was used to demonstrate the amount of water we could save in a day by turning off the tap when we brush our teeth.
- We added a new verse about conserving water to our **Green Schools rap**.
- Ms. Flanagan and her senior infants learned a song promoted by Irish charity "**Wells for Zoe**" and shared it with other classes.



LINKING WITH A DEVELOPING COUNTRY

- Sixth Class wrote a letter to **Aisling Healy**, a teacher from Clonmel, who has **started** a two year volunteer programme with **VSO** in **Ethiopia**. Aisling agreed to answer their questions about water. The correspondence was very successful and the girls shared their learning about water in Ethiopia with other classes at Assembly.
- Rang 6 learned that in many developing countries people, mainly women and children, walk on average 6km a day carrying up to 20 litres of water to meet their family's daily needs. The pupils then went on a **water walk** to help them understand what it feels like to walk a distance to get water and to have to carry the water you will use. The girls walked two km with a number of girls carrying four litres of water each. The water carriers later reported on their experience. We then measured the distance we have to walk in school to get clean, drinkable water. From seat to sink was a distance of 7m (desk closest to the classroom door) to 17 m (desk at the furthest corner). We realised how our kitchens are designed for convenience with many pupils agreeing that from tap to cooker was only a number of steps. Lucky us!

Learning from Aisling

"The one major difference between here and Ireland is that just because you turn on the tap doesn't mean any water will come out! Most days there is no water in the tap... At times when the water comes on I fill as many containers as I can find with water that I store and use as I need it... I need to be very careful and ration the water out if it is to last as it is impossible to predict when the water will come back on." Aisling Healy, Ethiopia, April 2013.

"In my home [in Ethiopia], to make the water safe, first of all I filter the collected water to remove solid particles with a limestone filter. The water takes a long time to drip slowly through the filter as it does its job. Then I must boil the filtered water and cool it before I can drink it or use it to wash anything that I will later eat. Boiling water removes the bacteria from it. However the boiling point of water is not constant, the higher the altitude the higher the boiling point.

Ethiopia is a very mountainous country and Woldia is at a height of 2,200m above sea level so I must boil the water for a long time before it is safe to drink. Obviously, to boil water I need electricity. We have electricity here so I am lucky but again it is not constant or reliable. On a day when both water and electricity are working I am very lucky and can filter and boil as much water as possible. So having a supply of safe drinking water involves a process which



lasts for about 24 hours - collecting water, filtering it, boiling it and cooling it. I must always be prepared in advance." Aisling Healy, Ethiopia, April 2013.

The work goes on...

- We were thrilled to hear we had achieved our Green Flag for Water Conservation. This was presented to us at the end of May.
- Sixth Class has planned and written films on the theme of water and is looking forward to creating these on ipads.

WHAT SIXTH CLASS PUPILS HAD TO SAY

"When I think about water in my life, I feel happy and great. When I think about water in developing countries I feel sad because some people have only dirty water." Pheobe N.

"The work I most enjoyed was walking with the buckets of water and when we tried to filter water." Lauren B O'R.

"The most surprising thing I learned was that people in developing countries have to walk up to six km a day for water." Leigh O'D.

"When I think about water in developing countries I feel that I should try to help those countries when I'm older because I think that every country should have clean water." Ali C.

***“When I think of people in Ethiopia and their difficulties getting clean water, I feel blessed to have water. I feel more appreciative of water now that I know a child like me does not have any. I really want to make a difference because every human is equal and worth saving.”
Mariam A.***



Co-ordinator: Noelle Lambert

A Challenging Thought ...

Recognising the need for education in Northern Uganda, Irish Aid supports children to attend primary and secondary school. Since 2010 Irish Aid has supported more than 1,300 students from the Karamoja and Acholi regions in Northern Uganda. This is part of a wider programme to tackle the challenges of education in a region with limited school facilities, less qualified teachers and poor attendance rates.

Source: Irish Aid Progress Report – www.irishaid.gov.ie

... Does this Change your Thinking ...?

THE LIGHT OF NANO NAGLE IN TODAY'S WORLD

Scoil Christ Rí Portlaoise



Our project looked at the life of Nano Nagle who was the founder of the Presentation Sisters. We discussed her impact on us as students of a Presentation school. Nano's well-off background meant she could really help those living in poverty to get an education. We spoke about all the good work she did and how courageous she was for a woman in those days. We discussed the possibility of Nano being venerated in the near future. Of course that is not in our hands!

AIMS

- To raise awareness about the life of Nano Nagle and her contribution to education.
- To highlight key points from Nano's life and see the wonderful work she did and also to show that we too can do wonderful work like Nano
- To encourage charity work in our school as we know how many people are living in poverty in today's world

TARGET GROUP - Our entire school community.

ACTIVITIES

- In groups we compiled information about Nano Nagle and then made Powerpoint presentations on her life.
- We discussed whether or not she should be made Venerable.
- We delivered our Powerpoint presentations to all of our Transition Year students in front of our Year Head and Class Tutors.
- We then decided to make a notice board with information about Nano's life so all members of our school community could see.
- Throughout the year we have held various charitable events in our school raising some much needed funds.

Co-ordinator: Jenna McGee

CHAIN REACTIONS

the domino effect of biodiversity

Scoil Bhríde Clane

AIMS

- To learn about biodiversity
- To increase the number of habitats available in our school grounds
- To make our school as environmentally friendly as possible
- To help the children raise their awareness of the effect of their actions on local, national and international environments



TARGET GROUP

Sixth Class girls, in association with the Green Schools Committee, co-ordinated the project. All classes were involved in planting bulbs and recording different species of birds in the school yard.

ACTIONS

- Teachers and pupils were questioned about their understanding of biodiversity using a questionnaire.
- All classes received a variety of bulbs to plant in their own window box.
- **Eanna Ní Lamhna** visited the school to talk to the pupils about native Irish wildlife.
- Local Clane Committee volunteer, **John Kennedy**, visited the Third - Sixth Classes to talk about native birds, animal and habitats and the local natural environment.
- We bought bird feeders, bird seed and nuts for local birds that visit our school yard. These bird feeders are currently moving around the school, being placed outside different classroom windows so that the pupils can observe local birds.
- Classes recorded the birds that they observed in the school yard on www.birdwatchireland.ie
- The Sixth Class pupils worked on projects to demonstrate the impact of biodiversity on international environments.
- This year our Green Schools Committee applied for their **Green Flag** for Biodiversity.



Co-ordinators: Marian Fox and Noreen Devitt

LIVING BELOW THE GOLDEN LINE

Coláiste Bríde Clondalkin



This project was undertaken to try to understand the issue of **poverty** and how it affects people's Human Rights throughout the world today. Three Transition Year groups (TY A, TY B and TY D) decided to research more on these topics and try to raise awareness in our school community.

AIMS

- To investigate the causes of poverty, what countries are predominately affected by it and to have an understanding of what can be done to help eradicate this pandemic in the world
- To identify and understand what Human Rights are and how they are not being adhered to in many countries
- To raise awareness within our school about these issues which will hopefully spread into the wider community
- To encourage our school community to donate to Concern which is a charitable organisation that has been working on the frontline to eradicate poverty and injustices in many of the countries we have learned about

TARGET GROUP

We hoped to educate our school's pupils, teachers and the wider community about injustices in the world. By raising awareness about poverty we hoped to highlight what steps can be taken to make this a fairer world to live in.

ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

Transition Year pupils contacted **Concern** and **Trócaire** to gather more information on poverty and injustice in the world. They sent out fundraising packs and information packs with useful DVDS and worksheets to use in class. Pupils carried out research and gathered this information to use in other projects.

The pupils watched two films highlighting injustice such as '**Hotel Rwanda**' and '**The Pursuit of Happiness**'. Pupils also watched an excellent documentary on Human Rights.

Transition Year pupils took part in a **poster competition** to raise awareness throughout the school. These posters also had word clouds attached with key words in relation to poverty.

Another way of raising awareness in our school was making **short animoto videos** that highlighted the issue of poverty. These videos were compiled and shown on a TV screen in reception. These videos helped pupils to **think critically** about poverty and injustice and also allowed them to share their learning with others.

A representative from **Concern** gave a talk to Transition Years. From this talk pupils learned that poverty is a **vicious and complex cycle** that takes more than just money to remedy. This talk made pupils realise the true meaning of the saying '**Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.**'

Pupils made up their own charities to stop injustice in the world. Some of the pupils' charities were called 'Food For Them' and 'Hardships and Hope'. Fundraising was carried out in the school. Pupils organised two bake sales on separate days in aid of Concern. Pupils carried out a sponsored silence for three classes collecting donations from their community for Concern which was sent towards sending animals and sustainable crops to developing countries.

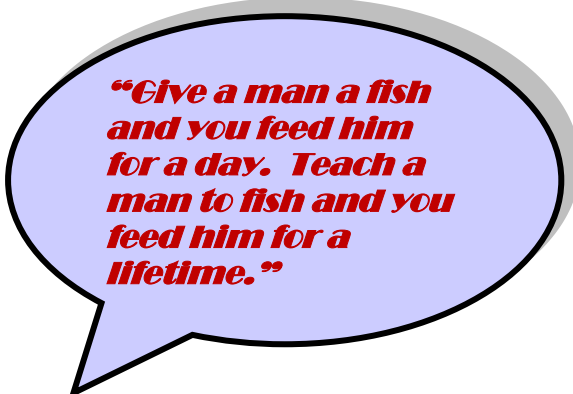
Pupils gave a **presentation** to their own class on a project they completed on injustice which included poems, facts and stories of people their age living in poverty. Pupils came up with ideas for **t-shirt designs** to promote

inequality with the winning design being made into a t-shirt to sell in the school and for the final seminar in Kilkenny.

Pupils had a **class debate** on the following topic '**Charity may benefit the state rather than the needy**'.

Pupils compiled and carried out a **survey** on what poverty means to pupils. This survey was given out to **Junior Cycle classes**. The statistics from the results were very interesting.

Pupils explored the issue of **homelessness** which is an effect of poverty in Ireland and abroad by researching **The Simon Community** and **Slumdogs** organisation dealing with the issues of homelessness in India. Pupils wrote a **newsletter** on injustice and poverty to distribute in school.



"Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime."

HOMELESSNESS



Homeless people living on the street,
Nowhere to go and nothing to eat,
People don't stop just stare as they go by,
Being so cruel they can't look the homeless in the eye,
There they sit all shaken and lonely,
But many people just think they are phonies.
Maybe that's true in certain cases,
But then maybe it's just in certain places,
Maybe they are genuine, maybe they are fake,
Is that a chance your willing to take?
Offer them a sandwich, a drink or some money,
You could change their life from bad and unlucky,
So give them a chance, give them some time,
I didn't expect this poem to rhyme,
So give them a penny that's all you have to spare,
Because at the end of the day their lives are unfair.

By Jennifer Curley, TYB

Co-ordinating Teachers: Claire Dixon, Helena Kennedy, Mary Prunty, Debbie Mc Ardle

A Challenging Thought ...

The MDG target of halving the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water has been achieved five years ahead of schedule. Despite unprecedented progress, 768 million people still drew water from an unimproved source in 2011.

Source: The Millennium Development Goals Report 2013 – www.unwomen.org

... Does this Change your Thinking ...?

WATER WORKS!

Scoil Íde Clondalkin



AIMS

- To describe the importance of water for human, plant and animal life
- To identify how we use water in our homes and work places
- To explore methods of conserving water
- To compare water usage in Ireland with countries with hot/cold climates
- To analyse the water we are drinking and how this impacts on our environment
- To suggest tips on conserving water to the local community via flyers and local newspaper

TARGET GROUP

Our whole school from Junior Infants to Sixth Class was involved in the project. We thought it was very important to raise the awareness of the importance of water in our whole school and community.

ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

- Children completed a survey on water usage in their homes.
- We conducted an **audit** of water usage in our school. Classes had to reduce their water usage over 3 months.
- The junior classes carried out **mini projects** on plants and animals that need water to survive.
- **Leaflets and posters** on how to save water around the school were distributed
- Sixth Class pupils designed their own water filters and exhibited at the **Young Scientist Exhibition**.
- We compared water usage in Ireland with parts of **Asia**.
- We produced **songs, poetry and artwork** based on water.
- We visited the **water treatment plant** in Ballymore Eustace where the children learned about water filtration and how we get water to our homes.

- We organised a **Science Fair** in our school hall where the children carried out experiments involving water.
- We celebrated **World Water Day** on 22 March 2013.
- Children made Powerpoint presentations based on water and showed these to other class levels.
- We designed **fridge magnets and bookmarks** with tips for saving water on them and distributed them to our parents and to all who visited our stand in Kilkenny.



OUTCOMES

We think our community is much better at saving water now. We understand that water is a precious gift and that we must try and conserve it.

WHAT WORKED WELL

- The visit to Ballymore Eustace was very exciting and interesting for the children to understand where their water comes from.
- Making and distributing the bookmarks and magnets were a great way of informing parents on how to save water.
- Children came up with excellent ways of conserving water around the school that the school have now adopted and are using on a regular basis.
- Comparing our water usage with other countries helped us appreciate how lucky we are to have water!

STUDENTS' REFLECTIONS

"I didn't realise how important it was to save water. Now we try save water at home all the time!" Megan 4th Class

"Kilkenny was so much fun. The projects were amazing and the drumming workshop was really good." Hannah 3rd Class



Co-ordinator: Audrey Dempsey

CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál Carlow



AIMS

- To celebrate interculturalism
- To promote respect for other cultures with particular focus on the cultures within our school community
- To celebrate diversity in all its forms

TARGET GROUP

Whole school community - pupils, teachers, ancillary staff and parents.

ACTIONS TAKEN

Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál held an **Intercultural Day** in March celebrating the various cultures and nationalities in our school. Many children came to school dressed in their native costumes. The hall was a riot of colour with every nationality in the school represented in a huge display of projects. The classes visited the hall and took part in a fact finding treasure trail while exploring the projects. A huge range of exotic foods was sent in by the parents giving us all a chance to sample the wonderful and diverse tastes of the various nationalities. An afternoon of song and dance followed with all classes performing a variety of multicultural songs and dances.

During the year some classes welcomed **guest speakers**. Sixth Classes were delighted to host Annie Lasaki's mother. **Mrs. Lasaki** arrived dressed in her wonderful native costume and told the class about her life in **Nigeria** before moving to Ireland. Fourth Classes were lucky to host **Fr. Padraic Shelley** who had recently returned from **India**. Fr. Shelley

presented a wonderful slideshow of his travels. The children were especially fascinated to see the photo of when he met **Ambika**, the girl on this year's Trócaire box. A **recipe book** featuring favourite recipes from all the countries represented in our school was compiled by the classes.

The senior classes took part in a **poetry competition** with celebrating diversity as its theme. Some fantastic poems were produced by the girls all showing clearly that they really understand that difference is definitely something to be celebrated. Sixth Classes established links with our **Eastern European** neighbours through pen pals.

Children celebrated their uniqueness in the creation of our **Diversity Tree**. **Multicultural songs, poems and dances** were learned and performed throughout the year.



WHAT WORKED WELL

Intercultural Day in particular was a great success. Children of various cultures were extremely proud to be given a platform on which to present a variety of their food, dance, customs and traditions to the wider school community. Parents came on board with great enthusiasm and all were in agreement that the hard work put in by all involved was worthwhile.

We had huge numbers of entries for the poetry competition and the standard of entries was extremely high. The participation of the senior classes in the construction of the Diversity Tree heightened the awareness of the positivity of diversity in all its forms in our lives. The children really enjoyed compiling the recipe book and many of the recipes included in it were sampled on Intercultural Day.



Co-ordinator: Bernadette Murphy

HEALTH IS WEALTH if you can afford it!

Presentation Secondary School Mitchelstown



As part of our Challenge to Change project, we investigated the progress of the Millennium Development Goals of reducing maternal and child mortality in developing countries.

AIMS

- To research the fourth Millennium Development goal of reducing the under-five child mortality rate by two thirds
- To investigate the fifth Millennium Development Goal of improving maternal health care in developing countries
- To make our school community more aware of the impact poor health care services have on women and children in developing countries
- To continue to sponsor the education of two children in Ethopia.
- To support other agencies who work trying to improve healthcare provision for those in developing countries

TARGET GROUP

Students from all years were involved in the Concern 24 hour fast. We enlisted the help of First, Second and Third Years for our ALMAS fundraising campaign.

ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

On April 11th, Liam, Education Officer from **Concern**, came to our school and held a workshop for us about Concern's work especially in the area of healthcare in developing countries. We learned a lot about the 1000 day programme. Women are 100 times more likely to die during pregnancy / child birth in developing countries than in Ireland. Maternal mortality rates are 15 times higher in the developing world. Without adequate nutrition during pregnancy and the early years of life children face a life time of problems.



The 1,000 days from the start of a woman's pregnancy until her child's second birthday offer a unique window of opportunity to shape healthier and more prosperous futures. The right nutrition during this 1,000 day window can have an enormous impact on a child's ability to grow, learn, and rise out of poverty. It can also have a profound effect on the long-term health, stability, and development of entire communities and nations.

Under-nutrition is still a leading cause of death of young children throughout the world. For infants and children under the age of two, the consequences of under-nutrition are particularly severe, often irreversible, and reach far into the future.



- During pregnancy, under-nutrition can have a devastating impact on the healthy growth and development of a child. Babies who are malnourished in the womb have a higher risk of dying in infancy and are more likely to face lifelong cognitive and physical deficits and chronic health problems.
- For children under the age of two, under-nutrition can be life-threatening. It can weaken a child's immune system and make him or her more susceptible to dying from common illnesses such as pneumonia, diarrhoea and malaria.

Focusing on improving nutrition for mothers and children in the 1,000 day window, helps to ensure a child can live a healthy and productive life. Evidence shows that the right nutrition during the 1,000 day window can:

- save more than one million lives each year
- significantly reduce the human and economic burden of diseases such as tuberculosis, malaria and HIV/AIDS
- improve an individual's educational achievement and earning potential.

Leading scientists, economists and health experts agree that improving nutrition during the critical 1,000 day window is one of the best investments we can make to achieve lasting progress in global health and development.

Solutions that make a difference

Solutions to improve nutrition in the 1,000 day window are readily available, affordable and cost-effective. They include:

- Ensuring that mothers and young children get the necessary vitamins and minerals they need
- Promoting good nutritional practices, including breastfeeding and appropriate, healthy foods for infants
- Treating malnourished children with special, therapeutic foods.



OUR WORK FOR ALMAS



Fr. Brian Kavanagh, founder of ALMAS, visits our school

Last year's Transition Year students established a link with a charity called ALMAS and its founder Fr. Brian Kavanagh. Through their fundraising efforts they managed to **sponsor the education of 2 children in Ethiopia** for a year. We decided to try and raise enough money to continue sponsoring these 2 children. This effort involved the whole school community. For the month of November and December we sold Christmas cards in our school and local communities. We even sold them at a Christmas trade fair in Mitchelstown. We also went carol singing in our local Tesco store. The combination of both fundraising ventures meant we managed to secure enough money to continue the sponsorship of **Ruth Abebe** and **Henok Girma** for another year.

Fr. Brian Kavanagh visited our school twice this year. The first time was in November and secondly in March after his trip to India and Pakistan. On both occasions he updated us on the work of Almas.

We learned that scabies, jaundice and typhoid are very common diseases experienced by the people in Calcutta and during the rainy season they also get dysentery and diarrhoea. All of these conditions are very common.

In 2009, ALMAS purchased a building for €89,000 which is now used by the sisters as a clinic and education centre for families living in the slums. Prior to this purchase the clinic operated from a garage!!



RAISING AWARENESS

As part of our concern fast in November, we decided to hold a **non-uniform day** with a difference. Each class group in the school was assigned a country in the developing world where Concern is based. They had to complete a research project about health care in that country and the work Concern is involved in. As part of the non-uniform day students were encouraged to dress in the colours of the flag of the country they had researched.



Students from 2B taking part in a non-uniform day in aid of Concern

WHAT WE DISCOVERED

The target for the **Fourth Millennium Development Goal** is to reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate.

- Child deaths are falling, but not quickly enough to reach the target.
- Revitalizing efforts against pneumonia and diarrhoea, while bolstering nutrition, could save millions of children.



Nearly 14,000 fewer children die each day than in 1990

6.9 million children still die before their fifth birthday each year

The target for the **Fifth Millennium Development Goal** is to reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio.

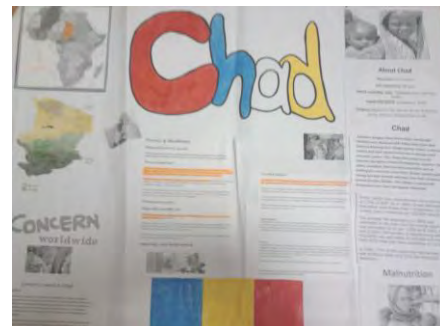
- The maternal mortality ratio in developing regions is still 15 times higher than in the developed regions.
- Giving birth is especially risky in Southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, where most women deliver without skilled care.
- The rural-urban gap in skilled care during childbirth has narrowed.



Maternal mortality has nearly halved since 1990. An estimated 287,000 maternal deaths occurred in 2010 worldwide, a decline of 47% from 1990, but levels are far removed from the 2015 target.

IMPACT OF THE PROJECT

This project gave us the opportunity to do something meaningful. It is great to know that our efforts will ensure that two children can continue to go to school for another year and receive a nutritious meal each day. Our experiences have changed our attitude towards others who are less well off than ourselves and we have a greater appreciation of things in our own lives that we had taken for granted.



Hunger and malnutrition remain the number one risk to health in the world today.



Co-ordinator: Martha Kent

A Challenging Thought ...

“A hungry mind cannot concentrate, a hungry body does not take initiative, a hungry child loses all desire to play and study.”

Source: World Food Programme

... Does this Change your Thinking ...?

FAIR TRADE

Sacred Heart Primary School Portlaoise



This year's project was based on fairtrade. We began by brainstorming the topic of fairtrade. We undertook web-based research about the countries where fairtrade products originate. We located the countries on our maps.

AIMS

- To learn about fairtrade and how it benefits the lives of workers in developing countries
- To identify fairtrade products in our supermarkets and our shopping baskets
- To create awareness among the class, school and wider communities about the concept of fairtrade in the world
- To highlight the impact of unfair trade on the workers in developing countries and the benefits to the worker of purchasing fairtrade products
- To conduct a survey among local supermarkets to identify and quantify the range of products on sale and the retail value of these products
- To encourage staff and students to purchase fairtrade products and to really think about what they are putting in their shopping baskets
- To highlight the extent of the injustices that can take place in the production of non-fairtrade products
- To investigate if fairtrade tea and coffee are on sale in coffee shops and restaurants in Portlaoise

ACTIVITIES

- We invited Sr. Barbara Raftery, a Presentation Sister, to speak to the class.
- We held a class coffee morning with fairtrade products.
- We hosted a cake sale with cakes baked with fairtrade ingredients as far as possible.

Our steering committee was made up of girls from Sixth Class and our teachers, Ms Coleman and Mrs Rafferty. Our target group was every family in Sacred Heart School and in particular the senior girls from Third Class to Sixth Class.

We spread our message to the wider community through the school newsletter and our local newspapers.

Co-ordinator: Deirdre Coleman

LOOKING AT - REACHING OUT

Presentation Senior Primary School Mullingar



When we read the Challenge to Change project themes we knew that we would love to take part as it would consolidate our Confirmation work of being "called to witness" and would help us to become caring members of society and increase our respect and awareness for others less well-off and for our world and its creatures.

Our choice from the Sustainability / Care of the Earth category was easy as there was an automatic linkage with other subject areas especially Religion, S.P.H.E., Geography, Green Schools, Art, Reading. We chose our title one day long after we had started our project research work when someone said: "Teacher we have spent ages looking at ... When are we going to begin Reaching Out to ... and so our Title was born Looking At - Reaching Out.

AIMS

- To create an appreciation of and respect for our wonderful environment
- To understand that even little steps at a local level can make a difference
- To understand and be aware of threats to our ecosystems - pollution, climate change, intensive farming and the effects of destruction of the rainforests

TARGET GROUP

Using our Sixth Class as a starting point we involved the other classes, parents, teachers, staff and the local community.

ACTIVITIES

After much discussion we researched all aspects of **threats to the environment**, using laptops and library facilities.

As we worked we kept our school community updated by frequent weekly announcements on the intercom and reached out to a wider audience by written articles in our newsletter and in the **Westmeath Examiner** dated 9th February 2013.

Our fundraising bake sale for **Trócaire** was a great success involving all classes as well as families at home who baked and made goodies for us. Thanks also to Fr. Crosbie who visited the two Sixth Classes not once, but twice. He gave very informed talks about climate change and its effects and the work of Trócaire.

Everything worked well as we enjoyed the research, the organising and the talks. The book, **Under the Weather**, by Tony Bradman, stories about climate change, was a nice read. We especially enjoyed the work about the polar bears. Everyone loved the poetry and the art work too.

We put our projects on display in the school hall and all classes had a chance to visit and view them. The Junior School asked to see the projects. Our projects and photos have been put up on the school website www.presnetationsnrmullingar.com/blog and we hoped to get a lot of hits.

Co-ordinator: Jacinta O'Sullivan

EQUALITY FOR GIRLS

Presentation Secondary School Kilkenny

In our Challenge to Change project this year we compared our lives with the lives of girls our age in different parts of the world, particularly in **Africa** and the **Middle East**.

TARGET GROUP

We wanted to inform the whole school but our target group was First and Second Years.



RESEARCH

We researched under the following headings:

EDUCATION	How long do girls spend in the education system? If girls are not in school, what are they doing?
LATER LIFE	What happens to them later in life? If they are working, what are their working conditions and how much are they paid? Where does this money go?
RIGHTS	What are their rights as girls? Are these rights similar to ours?
LIFE AT HOME	What is their place in the family? What work do they do for their family? What is their relationship with their family? Where do they mainly live (houses, shacks, town, countryside, village)?

We showed the difference in our lives and theirs. We informed other students and made them more aware of what's happening to girls in Africa and in the Middle East.

We researched information on the internet, looking up various websites. We surveyed the First Years to see how much they knew. We went to other classes and taught them about equality for girls. We invited a guest speaker in to talk to our target group.

Report by Second Year students Eva Capasso, Grace Aylward

Co-ordinator: Wendy Roche

A Challenging Thought ...

The people most at risk from climate change live in countries that have contributed the least to the atmospheric build-up of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases linked to global warming.

Texas, with a population of 23 million, emits more carbon dioxide than all 720 million residents of sub-Saharan Africa.

www.selfhelpafrica.org

... Does this Change your Thinking ...?

SOLDIER BOY, SOLDIER WHY?

Holy Trinity N.S. Fethard



AIMS

- To find out more about the human rights breach pertaining to child soldiers in Africa
- To investigate the use of child soldiers in the past
- To understand why child soldiers still exist in the 21st century
- To assess the effects of child soldiering on the child, his family and his community
- To empathise, through a compare and contrast study, with the boys and girls of our own age and size who become child soldiers
- To raise awareness of this human rights issue in our school community
- To spread our knowledge and findings to others

TARGET GROUP

Sixth Class and our whole school community

ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

Initially we discussed **our understanding of human rights** - how did they come about, why are they needed, in what ways are human rights being denied around the world? Next the project title was settled upon - **Soldier Boy, Soldier Why?** We then agreed on the aims of our project.

A **suggestion box** was set up in our class room to allow people to add their ideas on how best our project could deliver its aims.

Next the class **researched** topic of Child Soldiers.

We created a **life size cardboard cut-out** of a soldier boy. We painted him and dressed him in a soldier uniform. The purpose of this task was to demonstrate that the soldiers in some countries are the same age and size as children in Fourth, Fifth and Sixth classes.

As a class we created **posters** drawing awareness to the issue of child soldiers in our world today. We placed these posters at key points around our school. **Junior and Senior Infants** helped us bring awareness to **Red Hand Day** on February

12th. They kindly supplied us with their hand prints, contributing to our project in a meaningful way.

We participated in **Amnesty Friendship Week** whereby we sold bracelets with human rights inscriptions. Every child in the school purchased at least one bracelet, many bought much more.

Poetry was next. In small groups or individually children composed poems based on child soldier theme. Pictures accompanied.

Next we split into groups and focused on different aspects of our project.

Group A : Developed a **board game** with a twist. Players start out with a stash of money. The winner was the first person to end up with no money, after donating it at various stages during the game - rehabilitating a child soldier, purchasing school books for child soldiers.

Group B: Developed a **slide show**.

Group C: Created a **puppet show**.

Group D: Completed a **compare and contrast study** between an Irish child and a child soldier focusing on divergence as children mature.

Group E: Focused on **The Facts - Child Soldiers in Africa**.

Children composed and performed a **rap** based on the theme - Soldier Boy, Soldier Why?

Fifth Class created **short stories** and **Fourth Class** **drew pictures** to accompany these stories.

Third Class coloured pictures on the theme of child soldiers.

Second Class, while in preparation for their Communion, composed a **prayer** for all children caught up in a world of adult battles.

First Class came up with their own list of children rights.

LINKAGES MADE AND WITH WHOM

Lizzie Noone from **Concern** paid us a visit on February 27th. She explained the work of Concern in developing countries - how they are committed to seeing an end to child labour and promoting a happy and healthy childhood for all children. We did group work, quizzes and moving debates. We learned loads!

This year we participated in **Amnesty's Friendship Week** whereby we sold bands in our school to promote Human Rights awareness. It was a great success.

During our Lenten campaign we touched base with **Trócaire** in Cork. They explained their work in Africa and India and on how they focus on a better future for the children of poorer nations.



OUTCOMES

- The whole school community became more human rights aware.
- Children developed a sense of awareness for the other side of the coin and are showing a deeper appreciation for their childhood.
- Children learned to research independently.

WHAT NEXT?

We're not ready to stop yet. We will continue to spread the word especially during the time of 'The Gathering'. We plan to 'pay it forward' for a long time to come.

STUDENTS' COMMENTS

"It was very interesting learning about the life of Child Soldiers." Sarah

"It was great to bring awareness to such an important issue." Ciara

"It was shocking to realise that some children in the world today do not enjoy the same rights as us." Sally

"It was good to share our knowledge of our project with different schools and also learn about their findings." Katie

A LIFE LESS ORDINARY

A morning made promises of an interesting day
Butterflies waltzing the sweet smells of May
Mama by the stove feeding the grate
Papa still sleeping, seeding must wait.

School bag rests proudly on his willing back
I lead the way, fear keeps us on track
A school bell announces we're almost there
A scream from behind, noise everywhere.

I turned on the spot, eyes faced with fear
A bunch of army vans pulled up near
They took my brother but they took me first
Now I'm starting to think my life is cursed.

Van door shuts with a tremendous bang
Boys squashed together, now part of their gang
At this new place we're meant to call home
Spies we've become, off we must roam.

When not at war we do basic training
A happy life we are feigning
Itchy and dirty our men's uniforms we hate
We know we're just the soldiers bait.

My brother got shot, 3 bullets to the head
I watched him as he dropped, slow then dead
I went back to the camp with a frown on my face
This life of mine is a bloody disgrace.

I'm trying to escape, it's my only chance now
I'm doing my best but I just don't know how
I finally make it, it takes me a while
I'm on my way home now, long mile after mile.

It seemed all was quiet across the village
The closer I came I felt a great privilege
But suddenly I heard roars as they hunted me away
Now I don't think I have any place to stay.

Heart hangs heavy now, hope begins to fade
My soul reminds me of dark choices made
Family who rejects me, friends I have lost
A life less ordinary but at what cost.

Co-ordinator: Sarah O'Sullivan

DIRTY OLD SHANTY TOWNS

Presentation Primary School Portarlinton



The inspiration for our project came when our local town Portarlinton was chosen as a pilot town for a television series entitled "Dirty Old Towns". Last year, the children saw for themselves how community spirit and togetherness brought about many changes within the town in a short couple of weeks. Derelict buildings became useful. Older buildings were refurbished and the river walk was tidied up. We then decided that it would be a good idea to look at other "dirty old towns" across the globe and see if it was possible if we could bring about change in a far more impoverished locality.

AIMS

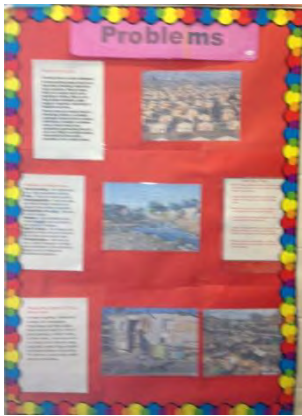
- To investigate and explore the lives of families and children living in the shanty towns of **South Africa** and **Zambia**
- To highlight the **stark contrasts** in the living conditions experienced by the South African people
- To examine the **causes of injustice and inequality** in these locations
- To contrast the beauty and the distasteful environments which exist there
- To make pupils aware of the hardships encountered due to limited water supply, shortage of space and shortage of food
- To listen to the accounts of people who are trying to remedy the situation
- To raise awareness of inequalities in the world
- To identify ways our school community can help

TARGET GROUP

Ms Malone's Third Class took on the topic of "Dirty Old Shanty Towns". They researched the background facts of South Africa before zoning in on its many shanty towns and getting a flavour of what it is like to live there. They were assisted by some of the Fifth Class girls who focused on Zambia and the similar kind of poverty which prevails there.

ACTIONS

We began by gathering facts on the South African nation and learning about its history. We firstly looked at its many good traits. We noted all the amazing and beautiful aspects which included safari animals such as the elephant, the lion and the cheetah. We looked at and captured pictures of the **Garden Route**, **Table Mountain** and the **magnificent vineyards**.



Upon further study of South Africa's history we realised that the diamond industry that was discovered in the 1860's brought much unrest to the country. We learned that the Boer War

caused a lot of tension and hurt and the government did not help the situation with their policy of **apartheid**. We gathered much information on anti-apartheid leaders such as **Nelson Mandela**. We made fact boxes and we drew pictures of the many safari animals. Each child had an aspect of South Africa to investigate.

Having understood apartheid we then saw a huge gap between rich and poor. We then took a look at the shanty towns and witnessed more of the poverty with the help of pictures, books and resource sites on the internet. We could see there was a huge shortage of food space and shelter and that problems of hygiene and

cleanliness were prevalent. We added to our knowledge of the shanty towns by inviting guest speakers to our class to talk about their experiences in trying to rebuild and assist the shanty towns. We welcomed **Laz Molloy** who worked near one of South Africa's capitals, Capetown. He and two of his friends travelled to South Africa as part of the **Niall Mellon Township Trust**. They spent two weeks building homes for families to live in. We also invited our own teachers in the school Ms Kieran and Mrs. Ducie to talk about their experiences while visiting Zambia.

We wrote down a list a list of questions we wanted to ask the guest speakers and recorded their answers. They showed us lots of video footage and photographs and talked at length about the families they helped. We then **wrote letters** to the **children in Zambia** as part of our project to establish a friendly relationship between our schools.

We then organised a non-uniform day to play our part in stemming the poverty in both Zambia and South Africa. We dressed in **rainbow colours** as South Africa is known as "The Rainbow Nation". The money we raised went towards aiding the abolition of these shanty towns in South Africa and helping to fund the education system in Zambia. We therefore supported charities who specifically help these causes: the **Niall Mellon Township Trust** and **Mission Alive Mountmellick**.

CONCLUSION

Overall our project was a success and we experienced no difficulties. The impact of the project was very positive.

- The children realised how fortunate they are in their own lives and how we should never take things such as food, water and shelter for granted.
- We became more aware of the poverty that occurs throughout the world particularly in South Africa and Zambia.
- We made new friendly relationships between our class and the children in the school in Zambia.
- We developed an understanding of various local charities and what they do.
- The children in the school are now more aware of the significance and effects of fundraising.

Co-ordinators: Niamh Malone and Mary Kieran

PRESENTATION SISTERS **Worldwide Community of Faith**

Presentation Secondary School Thurles

This year the Presentation Sisters celebrate 150 years in Thurles. Our Transition Year group decided to mark this momentous occasion. Our project highlighted the tremendous work that the Presentation Sisters do in Thurles at a local level, but also the work that the sisters do nationally and globally.

Our students researched

- The work of Nano Nagle and the founding of the Presentation Sisters
- The countries in which the 2,600 Presentation Sisters are active and the valuable work they do in these countries

Sr. Monica visited our school and spoke to the Transition Year students about her life as a Presentation Sister in Pakistan and in Ireland.

We visited the Presentation Sisters in the convent and interviewed them about their life as a Presentation Sister and the work they do/did in Ireland and abroad. We held a **Presentation Sisters Awareness Day** in our school. This consisted of a Mass for the Sisters in the convent and an invitation to them to a special tea afterwards in our school hall, where our project work, posters and information book were displayed.

Co-ordinators: Eimear Harrold, Valerie Mc Carthy, Edel Harding, Caroline Power



CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Scoil Mhuire Portlaoise



As part of our Challenge to Change project we conducted a survey to find out how many different nationalities are in our school. At first, we focused on the topic of racism but then we decided to focus more on diversity.

AIMS

- To increase the children's awareness of other cultures and nationalities within the school
- To learn about different cultures
- To understand, appreciate and celebrate cultural diversity in the school
- To allow our students to become actively involved in the music, dance, art and food of other countries

GROUPS INVOLVED

Ms Buggie, Ms Boland, Ms O' Hara and her Sixth Class girls, Ms Ní Shuillabháin and her Sixth Class girls, Deirdre McNally (SNA)

ACTIVITIES

- Each class made flags for their classroom doors with the countries of the children in their class.
- In Circle Time, the children discussed racism.
- We designed anti-racism posters and displayed them around the school.

- We compiled a survey about racism and distributed that to the older classes in the school.
- Sixth Class pupils learned an **Indian dance** from one of the girls in the class and we performed it for the whole school.
- We decided to make a **recipe booklet** with recipes from different countries and different nationalities in the school.

BUDDING MASTERCHEFS!

Each girl in Sixth Class put forward a recipe which was compiled for the recipe booklet. The recipes reflected the cultural diversity in both Sixth Classes, for example there is a recipe for **Onion Bhajis**, a well known Indian dish, as well as **Makoweic**, a sweet cake from Poland. An editing committee made the final adjustments before laying out the recipes in booklet form using computer software. Our I.T. skills were necessary for this phase of the process. The booklets were published and distributed among the children in our school thus promoting and celebrating cultural diversity.



A TOUCH OF BOLLYWOOD!

We practised an **Indian dance** choreographed by **Aleena** in Sixth Class. She was born in India and has been living in Ireland for the last two years. She enjoyed teaching this dance to the other girls. We surprised the other classes during lunchtime with a **'flash mob' style performance**. Again, we hoped this event highlighted the cultural diversity among students in our school.

What better way to explore the theme of culture than through food and dance?

Co-ordinator: Aoife Ní Shúilleabháin

A Challenging Thought ...

Every year, over 200 million children under the age of five will not reach their full potential. This is due to world leaders' broken promises, poverty, nutritional deficiencies and inadequate care and learning opportunities. Most of these children live in south Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

www.concern.net

... Does this Change your Thinking ...?

WHAT MAKES YOU BEAUTIFUL?

Presentation Secondary School Warrenmount



Our project looked at **stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination**. We explored different stereotypical views that people have. We explored how it feels to be labelled. This enabled us to empathise with other groups that can be stereotyped and to challenge the negative labels. We explored the issue of prejudice and questioned "How fair is it to judge people on face value? Can you judge a book by its cover?" Finally, we explored discrimination and how some people act on the unfair ideas and feelings that they have about others. We examined how this too can have negative effects on people.

AIMS

- To understand what is meant by stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination and that people have negative attitudes
- To be able to recognise our own and others' stereotypical and prejudiced attitudes
- To be aware of the negative consequences of stereotypes and prejudice
- To emphasise that everyone is unique and everyone is beautiful and we shouldn't have unfair ideas and feelings about people, and if we do we should not act on these ideas and feelings!

TARGET GROUP

First and Second Year students were targeted. A display was created for the school.

WORK UNDERTAKEN

Firstly, we conducted a survey with the First and Second years to see if they understood stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination. Following this, we created a Powerpoint presentation for First and Second Year students to explain the terms stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination. We organised a **labelling game** and explained to the students how having unfair ideas and feelings about someone can be unkind and hurtful. We also explained to them how acting on these unfair ideas and feelings can have a negative impact on the person. We created a short video on stereotyping and challenged the students in our school to think before they judge someone.

OUTCOME

We created awareness in our school of how unfair it is to stereotype and prejudice people. We helped students to see how hurtful it can be to others and how our attitudes can affect others. There was a great sense of team work and co-operative learning as everyone worked well on the project. We thoroughly enjoyed taking part in the Challenge to Change project while challenging the views of our school community as well.



Co-ordinator: Gemma Delaney

THE SECRET GARDEN

Scoil Mhuire Clondalkin



In June 2012 Scoil Mhuire received some great news ... the Presentation Sisters agreed to give us the use of some land beside the school for a garden. The piece of land has a wall around it and cannot be seen from the school and so the idea for our secret garden was born. We aimed to get the whole school community involved in this project.

AIMS

- To clear the garden of weeds and rubble
- To spray the soil to kill off the weeds
- To acquire topsoil from the County Council and spread it in the garden
- To draw up a plan for the garden
- To transfer our raised beds from our allotment to the garden
- To re-locate our composters
- To plant fruit trees, vegetables and herbs and study them as they grow
- To paint murals on the garden walls
- To raise money for water butts and a lawnmower

OUTLINE OF WORK UNDERTAKEN

- Each class compiled a diary of their visits to the garden.
- Junior Infants designed and made scarecrows.
- We made a plan for the garden.
- The garden was cleared of all weeds and rubble. It was rotivated and sprayed three times to prepare for planting.
- The old gate wasn't safe and so we have installed a new one.
- **South Dublin County Council** gave us some topsoil and this has been spread in the garden.
- **Composters** from the school grounds have been moved into the garden.



Co-ordinators: Siobhan McKiernan and Naomi O'Dowd

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Presentation Secondary School Waterford

Turn Off the Red Light

End Prostitution and Sex Trafficking in Ireland



This year's Challenge to Change project involved our Transition Year students.

AIMS

- To raise awareness about human trafficking in Ireland and abroad
- To educate our senior students about human trafficking, its effects and where it takes place
- To learn about human trafficking and to be able to tell other people about it
- To develop new skills - communication, teamwork, teaching

TARGET GROUP

Our target group was our Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Year students, the senior students in our school. We also wanted to give information about human trafficking to other young women in our local community.

ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

- We organised a **debate** on human trafficking.
- We made **posters** to raise awareness about human trafficking in the school.
- We **researched** human trafficking on the internet.
- We read **personal stories** about people who had been trafficked.
- We watched **documentaries** about human trafficking to help us understand how trafficking takes place and how easily it can happen.

Co-ordinator: *Mary McNamara*

A Challenging Thought ...

Millions of people around the world are likely to be pushed back into poverty because climate change is undermining economic development in poor countries, the World Bank has warned.

www.ipa.org

... Does this Change your Thinking ...?

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

St. Mary's Primary School Dungarvan



In our project we studied homelessness in Ireland and abroad. We researched the causes and effects of homelessness on adults and children. We compared homelessness in **Ireland** to homelessness in **India** and **Haiti**. We also researched the causes and effects of poverty and famine in 19th century Ireland and compared it to **famine** in our world today.

AIMS

- To understand the causes and effects of homelessness and poverty in Ireland and globally
- To examine famine in Ireland in the 19th Century and in India in the 21st Century
- To raise awareness of homelessness and poverty in our school community and locally
- To identify the effects of natural disasters on these issues
- To raise funds for a local charity involved with homelessness and poverty
- To identify practical ways in which we can make a difference to these issues
- To develop a sense of empathy towards these issues

TARGET GROUP

Fourth and Fifth Class, other students in St. Mary's Primary School, our families and our local community

ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

- We began the project by identifying our prior knowledge on the issues of homelessness in Ireland in the present day.
- Children wrote **diary entries** about life as a homeless woman in New York during **Hurricane Sandy**.

- Children composed poems based on the effects of homelessness on people's lives.
- We explored **songs and poems** on the theme of homelessness and famine.
- We composed a **rap** based on homelessness.
- We created a **multiple choice quiz** for other classes in the school to help raise awareness of homelessness.
- Pupils read and reviewed the novel **Under the Hawthorn Tree** by Marita Conlon-McKenna.
- The children undertook detailed projects on various aspects of the **Great Famine** in Ireland.
- Children completed various **art and drama** activities based on the famine and homelessness.
- We carried out research on the geography, homelessness and poverty in **India and Haiti** today.
- We compared life in India and Haiti to life here in Ireland.
- We contacted various organisations involved in helping with these issues including; **St. Vincent de Paul, Simon Community, Goal, Trócaire, Homeless World Cup, Focus Ireland** and **Gorta** and received very valuable information from them.
- We discussed how to raise awareness in our school community and local community.
- We investigated the **rights of the child** in relation to homelessness.



Co-ordinators: Angela Power and Kate Kieley

A Challenging Thought ...

Across Africa, women carry out 90% of the work of processing food crops and providing household water and wood, and 80% of the work of food storage and transport from farm to village. In Kenya, women provide approximately 75% of total agricultural labor force.

www.selfhelpafrica.org

... Does this Change your Thinking ...?

INTERCULTURALISM

Presentation Secondary School Clonmel



The main idea behind this project was to find out how many different cultures existed within our school community. From this we wanted to create a cultural afternoon where each country's information would be displayed e.g. flags/dress/food/music. A guest speaker was invited to the class. The girls participated in a variety of activities to educate themselves on cultures of the world.

AIMS

- To appreciate and understand the differences in cultures within their own school community
- To foster an awareness that these cultures have lots of common characteristics. While borders or language may divide them friendships can bring them together.

TARGET GROUP - The main target group was other First Year classes.

ACTIVITIES

- We carried out a survey of countries represented in our school population.
- We organised a display of Christmas posters in the languages of our school community.
- We raised awareness of the different languages in our school.
- We linked with our Christmas theme of where love can be seen.

Co-ordinator: Margaret O'Mahoney

GLOBAL WARMING

Scoil Chroí Naofa Athenry



For this, our first Challenge to Change project, we focused on global warming.

AIMS

- To develop a greater understanding of what is meant by global warming
- To document the adverse effects of global warming
- To come to an understanding of how we can make a difference in the treatment of our planet
- To educate our school community on global warming and the role we play in perpetuating it
- To link in with our Green School Committee

Target Group

Sixth Class

ACTIVITIES

- We surveyed our school community and analysed the results.
- We documented definitions and facts about global warming.
- Using our artistic expertise, we created 3D models of endangered species.
- Using our musical talent, we composed an anthem for global warming awareness.
- Our findings were displayed for the whole school community.

OUTCOME

At the completion of our project, our whole school community realised their responsibility as citizens in working towards minimising global warming.



“Challenge to Change is very beneficial in so many different ways. Girls of this age love embarking on projects, they love group work and collaboration, so there is that sense of teamwork, working together and that lovely sense of camaraderie. I think because a project like this crosses all curricular areas from creative writing to the arts it taps into the interest of a lot of children and it’s catering for your more academic children to your more creative children, so everyone gets a chance to make a really good contribution.”

(Caitriona Cronin in an interview with Irish Catholic, 2 May 2013)

Co-ordinator: Cathriona Cronin

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Presentation Primary School Waterford



Our Challenge to Change project this year focused on cultural diversity with particular reference to customs and food. We examined language, food, dress, music, song and dance.

TARGET GROUP

Fourth Class

AIMS

- To raise awareness of the cultural diversity within our school
- To hold an International Day to celebrate diversity and to involve our school community, especially parents
- To bring together and bond people from different countries



ACTIVITIES

- Our survey increased our knowledge of the diversity of our school population.
- We organised a Food/Customs Fair in the school and we encouraged the involvement of parents and pupils of diverse nationalities
- Our poster campaign involved other classes.
- We compiled a variety of international recipes.

Co-ordinators: Joan Fetton and Imelda Kjrwan

LIVING WELL, LIVING MEANINGFULLY

Our Lady's College Greemhills Drogheda



TARGET GROUP Sancta Maria Transition Year students

AIMS

- To become more self-aware
- To become more aware of the needs of others
- To empathise with those less fortunate than ourselves
- To care for the beautiful earth which is our inheritance

Co-ordinator: Eileen O'Sullivan



RACISM IN SPORT

Presentation De La Salle College Bagenalstown

Our project was aimed at the promotion of an anti-racism awareness in the area of sport. We aimed to do this by firstly holding a slogan campaign "We're all the same, just play the game." Then using this slogan we promoted our idea through a poster competition aimed at Fifth and Sixth Class primary students in our locality and at the students attending our school. The winning posters were then sent out to the clubs our students are members of. We aimed to raise awareness of this issue by getting speakers to talk to our class and other classes in the school. We also gave classes on the topic ourselves to First, Second and Third Years.



TARGET GROUP

Our target group for this project was all members of our local community involved in sporting activities.

AIMS

- To make primary school children aware that racism is wrong and that it is unacceptable
- To spread the message to students in secondary school and anyone engaged in sporting activities in our local community that racism is unfair and everyone is equal
- To encourage students to stand up to racist attitudes
- To highlight the fact that there were many more people of different races involved in the London 2012 Olympics compared to Beijing 2008
- To show people that racism in sport is becoming less and less common



OUTLINE OF WORK UNDERTAKEN

We chose a slogan to use and we held a poster competition for Fifth and Sixth class primary school children in our local area. We sent our letter to these local primary schools informing them about the competition. We asked them to create a poster against racism in sport using the slogan. We set the prize at €30 for the overall winner and at €15 for two runners up. Two members of our class put together a Powerpoint presentation to present to our First, Second and Third Year students during religion classes so they too were made aware of racism in sport.

Co-ordinator: Gillian O'Neill

***Thanks to all our schools who participated in our
Tenth Anniversary Challenge to Change Project***

*Presentation Primary School Portarlinton
Presentation Secondary School Warrenmount
Presentation Secondary School Thurles
St. Joseph's College Lucan
Scoil Mhuire Portlaoise
Scoil Mhuire Clondalkin
Scoil Ide Clondalkin
Scoil Chríost Rí Portlaoise
Scoil Bhríde Naofa Kildare
Scoil Bhríde Clane
Scoil Áine Clondalkin
Sacred Heart Primary School Portlaoise
Presentation Senior Primary School Mullingar
St. Joseph's G.N.S. Mountmellick
Presentation Secondary School Mitchelstown
Presentation Secondary School Kilkenny
Holy Trinity N.S. Fethard
Presentation Primary School Kilkenny
Presentation Primary School George's Hill
St. Mary's Primary School Dungarvan
Colaiste Iosagain Portarlinton
Colaiste Bríde Secondary School Clondalkin
Presentation Primary School Clonmel
Presentation Primary School Castlecomer
Scoil Mhuire gan Smal Carlow
Presentation Secondary School Waterford
Presentation Secondary School Clonmel
Presentation Secondary School Ballingarry
Scoil Chroí Naofa Athenry
Presentation Primary School Waterford
Our Lady's College Greenhills Drogheda
Presentation De La Salle College Bagenalstown
Presentation Primary School Warrenmount*



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The views expressed herein are those of Presentation Education Office and project schools and can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of Irish Aid, Department of Foreign Affairs.